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Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development

Joint written statement* submitted by the New Humanity, non-governmental organization in general consultative status, Organisation Internationale pour le Droit à l'Education et la Liberté d'Enseignament (OIDEL), Apprentissages Sans Frontières (ASF), Association Points-Cœur, Associazione Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII, the Dominicans for Justice and Peace (Order of Preachers), International Catholic Child Bureau (ICCB), the International Federation of University Women (IFUW), Istituto Internazionale Maria Ausiliatrice (IIMA), the Mothers Legacy Project, the Catholic International Education Office (OIEC), the International Volunteerism Organization for Women, Education, Development (VIDES), non-governamental organizations in special consultative status, Mouvement contre le Racisme et pour l'Amitié entre les Peuples, non-governamental organization on the roster.

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[26 May 2014]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

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Assessment of the educational attainment of students and the implementation of the right to education*

We welcome the Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to education, Kishore Singh, entitled *Assessment of the educational attainment of students and the implementation of the right to education (A/HRC/26/27)*as the continuation of his previous report concerning quality education and normative action (A/HRC/20/21) presented in 2012. Indeed, assessment of the educational attainment of students is essential for measuring quality education and thus implementing the right to education. We would like here to recall Mr. Singh's proposition of a holistic conceptual framework for quality education which comprises: "(i) a minimum level of student acquisition of knowledge, values, skills and competencies; (ii) adequate school infrastructure, facilities and environment; (iii) a well-qualified teaching force; (iv) a school that is open to the participation of all, particularly students, their parents and the community."[1]This framework needs to be considered and carried out in order to ensure quality education in a more efficient manner.

We are pleased to see that the Special Rapporteur recommends in his report that assessment of students' attainments should be based on the four pillars of education, as described in the report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty First Century, known as the Delors Report –This pillars include: learning to know, learning to do, learning to be and learning to live together. In this regard, we appreciate the Spain's new education law for his commitment in assessing students' attainments.

In the same terms, we completely agree with the recommendation made to States to move forward to a more holistic approach in assessing students' attainments which goes beyond reading, writing and arithmetic, including in this new approach the essential human rights objectives. Although it has been a step in the right direction to have the first assessments based on reading, writing and arithmetic (such as PISA), education is much more than that. So assessment should be founded on a human-rights based approach. We do acknowledge the improvements made in this sense by China.

It is also important for us to see that the Special Rapporteur recommends student-based evaluation mechanisms in order to see the progress of each student aside from school standards. This approach about assessment mechanisms is extremely important for two primary reasons. Firstly, it will allow us to see the reflection of the local and national curriculum requirements. Secondly, a personalized assessment for each student is extremely helpful in applying inclusive education. It provides constructive information for teachers in order to support students to complete each module, and to ensure progressive improvement to vulnerable groups in particular. Ecuador has made good efforts in order to achieve this goal.

We are glad to see that the recommendations made by Mr. Singh related to assessment mechanisms are not limited to primary and secondary education, but apply also to technical and vocational education and training (TVET). We are concerned about the importance of this formation due to its profound implications in the twenty-first century new economy. That is why we think such an important form of education must be assessed like the others, including a holistic approach. An exemplar country in the assessment of TVET is South Africa.

We are pleased to observe the importance of providing teachers with additional training and support. As far as we understand the key role of teachers to improve quality education they need to receive continuing training for two main reasons: 1st. To learn and teach a curriculum that should be periodically updated because of new discoveries in science and the new important historical events that may have happened 2nd. To know and understand which human rights values or democratic principles should be embedded in the curriculum, depending on the local circumstances.

[1] SINGH.K.*Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to education, Normative action for quality education* (2012) (pag.6, paragraph 21)

We greatly appreciate the efforts of the Special Rapporteur, especially for the significant suggestion he has made to add the important issue of Quality of Education in the post-2015 agenda. We are living in a changing world with a lot of new challenges that education must meet -increased migrations, the increase proportion of jobs in the tertiary level, the increasing importance of information technology and its access. At the same time, education systems must radically evolve due to several deep changes new challenges they have to face –for example: the access to information that students have is changing the role of teachers, the financial problems of the school need a new answer, the definite integration of human rights approach in education programs. Thus, these reasons, together with the extreme importance of the creation of an international quality framework, should have an essential role in ensuring worldwide development in the following years. We would like to reference here our position paper "*Post-2015: Development Guided by the Principle of Human Dignity*" where the NGO Platform on the right to education explains in more details our point of view. [2]

Finally, although Mr. Singh has commented that "government encourages NGOs and civil society organizations in their valuable role in raising the level of the public debate on key issues and in defending a holistic approach to student assessments"[3] we want to emphasize again the importance of civil society and NGOs as guarantors of quality education. We would like to encourage States and governments to maintain constructive dialogue with them.

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* The UNESCO Chair of the University of Bergamo, the UNESCO Chair of University of La Rioja, the Collège Universitaire Henry Dunant and Mission Educative Lasallienne, without consultative status, also share the views expressed in this statement.

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[2] http://www.ngoeducation.org/Plateformedroiteducation/documents/Platform_Education%20post%202015%20_final_EN.pdf

[3] SINGH.K.*Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to education, Assessments of the educational attainment of students and the implementation of the right of education* (2014) (pag.20, paragraph 96)